

As a life long baseball fan, I wish him well.●

POSTAL WORKER RECOGNITION

● Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to say "thank you" to a most diverse collection of government employees, unified by many factors but most of all, a commitment to service. Thank you for the professionalism that you display which has allowed us to come to expect value, reliability, and uniformity from one of the world's largest businesses.

Who are these employees? They're truck drivers, engineers, janitors, accountants, detectives, customer service personnel, and letter carriers. They're United States Postal Employees.

The United States Postal Service is a business with an unusual pedigree, even though we commonly recognize the "post office" as a traditional government entity. Yet while its origins can be traced to the origins of our country, the Postal Service as we know it today is only 27 years old. USPS went through an extensive revamping in the late 1960s and early 70s. The Post Office Department was removed from the President's Cabinet and converted into a non-profit government corporation. The result was an effective elimination of politicians from the management of postal affairs.

Congress passed the Postal Reorganization Act which created the new United States Postal Service on July 1, 1971. This month, we recognize an organization able to modernize, while maintaining the fundamental unifying factors required of such a massive global organization.

USPS has a unique set of privileges and responsibilities which serve to ensure uniform service and stable prices for mail delivery throughout the United States. The Chair of the USPS Board of Governors announced in late June that there would be no postal rate increase for 1998. The next rate increase will take effect January 10, 1999. At that time the price of a First-Class letter will increase by one penny, to 33 cents.

USPS last increased rates on January 1, 1995. When the new rates take effect next year, it will be the second straight rate adjustment below inflation, in effect cutting the real cost of a First-Class stamp by seven percent since 1995. That makes the cost of a First-Class letter among the lowest in the industrialized world—a feat managed without taxpayer subsidies. In Japan, the cost of a First-Class letter is \$.57, in Great Britain it is \$.42 and in Germany it is \$.62.

Yet the success of USPS in its ability to reorganize, modernize, and compete in a global marketplace is due to each individual postal employee, because that's what comprises successful business operations—great employees.●

TRIBUTE TO JUSTIN S. MORRILL ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, 1998 is an important year for Vermont and the nation as it marks the 100th anniversary of the death of a great statesman, Senator Justin S. Morrill. Senator Morrill was a remarkable man; his authorship of the Land-Grant College Act gave, and continues to give, millions of Americans the opportunity to pursue higher education. To recognize this accomplishment, the Stratford Historical Society is holding a symposium on July 16 and 17, 1998 to pay homage to Senator Morrill and his legacy.

Senator Morrill was one the most influential politicians in the mid-nineteenth century. During his 43 years in Congress, he introduced many innovative bills and worked to improve the lives of millions of Americans through higher education. The Land-Grant College Act provided public lands for agricultural colleges and, in turn, set the standard for American public universities. In addition to these accomplishments, Senator Morrill was also instrumental in the creation of the Washington Monument and the Library of Congress.

In fact, on November 4, 1997, I was honored to attend a ceremony at the Library of Congress to unveil a plaque in the Great Hall of the Jefferson Building honoring Senator Morrill. The plaque was presented to the Library on behalf of the people of Vermont by the Vermont Center for the Book, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Jefferson Building. The plaque honors the vital role that Senator Morrill played in making the Jefferson Building a reality.

Mr. President, Justin S. Morrill was a dedicated statesman who spent his life helping others. He revolutionized education and, as poet Robert Frost once noted, "For me there is no greater name in American education than that of Senator Justin Smith Morrill." Such an amazing man deserves recognition and, on this 100th anniversary of his death, I pay tribute to him and his accomplishments.●

HIGHER EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1998

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now turn to H.R. 6, the higher education bill, and that the Senate insist on its amendment, request a conference with the House, and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate, all without further action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Presiding Officer appointed Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. COATS, Mr. GREGG, Mr. FRIST, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. ENZI, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr.

DODD, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. REED conferees on the part of the Senate.

NATIONAL CRIMINAL HISTORY ACCESS AND CHILD PROTECTION ACT

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. 2294 introduced earlier today by Senator HATCH.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2294) to facilitate the exchange of criminal history records for noncriminal justice purposes, to provide for the decentralized storage of criminal history records, to amend the National Child Protection Act of 1993 to facilitate the fingerprint checks authorized by that Act, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I have introduced the National Criminal History Access and Child Protection Act of 1998. I am pleased to have been joined by the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee, Senator LEAHY, as well as by Senator DEWINE and the distinguished Minority Leader, Senator DASCHLE, in introducing this legislation, which also has the support of the Administration.

This important legislation addresses a critical issue—the access to criminal history records for legitimate purposes other than use within the criminal justice system. These records are frequently used today for a wide variety of important purposes, such as employment background checks for child care workers, health care workers, elder care workers, teachers, school bus drivers, security guards, and bar applicants.

Few disagree with the use of criminal history records to ensure that those in important positions of trust with our children, elderly, and persons with disabilities do not have criminal backgrounds making such trust inappropriate or even dangerous. Yet, currently, policies and procedures on disseminating these records vary widely from state to state.

This legislation addresses this issue, by enacting what has come to be known as the Triple I (III) Compact. This proposed interstate and federal-state compact is supported by the Administration, the FBI, the Criminal Justice Information Advisory Policy Board, and all state criminal history repositories. It would establish "rules of the road" for the interstate sharing of criminal history records for non-criminal history purposes, such as background checks for employees who work with children or who are in otherwise sensitive jobs. The compact provides for state-to-state and federal-to-state sharing of records, through the Interstate Identification Index (III) and the National Fingerprint File (NFF).